



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, April 27, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room
12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD

MINUTES

Members present: Gary Magnuson (Chair), Andy Celmer (Vice Chair), Bill Allen, Chuck Eirkson, Lonnie Ropp, Matt Moran, Kimberly Stewart

County Staff: Kimberly Gaines, Karin Flom, Andrew Stine

Guest Speakers: Heather Hutchinson (District Manager, Catoctin and Frederick Soil Conservation Districts), Kayce Heister

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's April 27, 2023, meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Chair Gary Magnuson opened the meeting with a review of the March 23, 2023, meeting minutes. With no corrections noted by the Members present, Gary called for a motion to approve the March 23, 2023, meeting minutes, and Lonnie Ropp made the motion that was seconded by Bill Allen. Unanimous approval.

As a matter of introduction in his new role as Chair, Gary addressed the desired rules of procedure for the evening and requested a review of the Purpose Statement of the Commission.

Chuck Eirkson inquired about potential reports on new legislation. Matt Moran and Lonnie Ropp proposed the nomination of a member (or members) to review policies and legislation that could have a potential impact on the watershed and bring it forward for review by the Commission. Chair Gary Magnuson proposed that this duty be included as an agenda item for discussion at a future meeting, and the present membership concurred that it should be designated for future discussion.

Heather Hutchinson, District Manager for the Catoctin and Frederick Soil Conservation Districts (CFSCD) provided the Commission with an overview of the NRCS/MDA/Soil Conservation District offices in Frederick County, their staff, and programs. A presentation on the Cover Crop program followed that addressed the purpose of the cover crop program, the implementation processes followed by staff, and possible avenues for assisting District staff in efforts to help preserve water quality within the watershed. Chuck Eirkson stated that the Commission should help advocate on behalf of the CFSCD in matters of resources and budgeting at the County level, and the Members of the Commission agreed.

Kayce Heister then presented a brief overview of the Monocacy River clean-up efforts that she has been organizing in recent years. Kayce indicated that one of the biggest issues she sees regarding Monocacy River clean-up efforts is the presence of discarded tires in the river (including large truck and tractor tires) that are often difficult to remove and properly dispose. Kayce stated that the next river clean-up event is scheduled for June 3, 2023. It will be conducted by watercraft and will depart from the Riverside Park Boat Ramp in Frederick and end at Pinecliff Park in the County. Participants without access to watercraft will be able to assist in clean-up efforts by picking up litter along the riverbanks at these parks. Bill Allen did indicate that there may be agricultural partners who can assist in reducing the cost of large tire disposal and it may be possible to share this information with the public to decrease the number of tires discarded in the river. Gary Magnuson indicated that the Frederick County Public Works Department may also aid in the removal of collected trash.

The next item for discussion was the Draft Monocacy River Report. A Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST) data graph, provided by Andy Celmer, regarding Nitrogen inputs to the Monocacy River in Frederick County was presented for inclusion in the report. Chair Gary Magnuson opened the floor for discussion by the Commission members, and the data sources for the CAST model as well as the intent the graph would fulfill in the report were discussed. Bill Allen and Kimberly Stewart stated that the graph does communicate the fact that the agricultural sector in Frederick County is making an effort to improve water quality, but that it needs more support and advocacy at the local level to achieve water quality improvement goals. Gary and Andy Celmer volunteered to craft additional language for review at the next meeting that addresses how additional support for the agricultural sector in meeting nitrogen input reduction goals might be incorporated into the report.

Staff presented the revised map of river access points to the Commission that now includes street addresses and icons for facilities available to the public at each access point. The map was well received by the Commission and will be posted on the County's website. The map will also be forwarded to Frederick County Recreation and Parks for their use in updating the Scenic River Trails Map.

Kimberly Gaines provided a brief update regarding an offer by the County video production office to produce a 3-minute video segment as well as a few shorter segments for airing on Channel 19 on the subject of the Monocacy River. Kim also indicated that the Communications Manager for Livable Frederick may be an available resource for the Commission to utilize in sharing information about the activities of the Commission and about the watershed in general. The Commission membership shall consider the topics they would like to cover in the video presentation.

Chair Gary Magnuson provided the Commission with a summary of the April clean up event undertaken with the International Mountain Biking Association and asked Staff to contact the Division of Energy and the Environment about the possibility of sharing tools and equipment related to watershed clean-up activities in the future.

Chair Gary Magnuson, Bill Allen, and Matt Moran indicated that they have requested reappointment to the Commission for a new term beginning in July 2023. A discussion was held regarding two current

openings on the Commission's roster. One opening is for an owner of property adjacent to the Monocacy River, and one is for an individual possessing education and/or experience in earth sciences and/or natural resources. If Members are aware of an individual interested in joining the Commission, the applicant can send a letter of interest and a resume to Joyce Grossnickle (jgrossnickle@frederickcountymd.gov) at Frederick County.

Kimberly Stewart provided an update for the Outreach Subcommittee report. There was a brief discussion of outreach opportunities via social media and the possibility of the creation of a social media account (or accounts) for the Commission. Staff offered to be a liaison between the Commission and the Communications Manager for the Division of Planning and Permitting. There was also a discussion about potential outreach to the Frederick County Public Schools. Kimberly Stewart and Matt Moran will coordinate regarding outreach to the schools with the intent of further discussion of this effort with the Commission at a future meeting.

In closing, Lonnie Ropp indicated for the record that she will not be able to attend the May 2023 meeting of the Sustainable Monocacy Commission.

With no other business, Chuck made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Matt seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.